



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/725,786	12/01/2003	Douglas Taylor Hamer	33185-001	3820

7590

03/17/2006

John B. Hardaway, III
NEXSEN PRUET JACOBS & POLLARD, LLC
P.O. Box 10107
Greenville, SC 29603

EXAMINER

HWU, DAVIS D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3752

DATE MAILED: 03/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/725,786	Applicant(s) HAMER, DOUGLAS TAYLOR	
	Examiner Davis D. Hwu	Art Unit 3752	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10, 16 and 17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10, 16 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment and remarks of February 22, 2006 are acknowledged and entered.
2. Applicant's remarks with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.
3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. Claims 1-10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benefiel et al. in view of Thorball et al. and Wong et al. (US Patent 6,333,050 cited previously)

Benefiel et al. discloses a semi-rigid straw 212 (Column 7, lines 35-36) substantially filled with a material, the straw having tightly fitting end caps 36 (see the embodiment of Figure 6) in which the straw is formed from materials including polypropylene or polyethylene and is made to be transparent, translucent, or opaque (Column 6, lines 51-64). Thorball et al. teach a straw filled with consumable material in which the straw has an inside diameter of least 20 mm or 0.78 inches (Claim 10 of Thorball et al.) and Wong et al. teach a straw having a wall thickness of 0.1 to 0.4 mm. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have made the straw of Benefiel et al. to have an inside diameter of at least 0.75 inch as taught by Thorball et al. to be able to fill the straw with the desired amount of material and to have made a minimum wall thickness of 0.02 mm as taught by Wong et

Art Unit: 3752

al. since Wong et al. discloses that such wall thicknesses are known in the art.

Regarding claim 16, the straw of Benefiel et al., Thorball et al., and Wong et al. can have a capacity of at least 50 ml of material depending on the length of the straw.

Regarding the various types of materials of which the straw is filled with, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Benefiel et al.

Benefiel et al. show a beverage dispenser comprising a semi-rigid straw having two open ends, removable end caps 36 each on the two open ends, a hollow straw being substantially filled with an agent 20, wherein the end caps are removable and whereby the beverage is dispensed as recited since a vacuum is created at the end of the dispenser from the user sips and positive pressure is created on the other end of the dispenser. Filling the straw with a beverage is a statement of intended use since it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is

Art Unit: 3752

intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Davis D. Hwu whose telephone number is 571-272-4904. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dave Scherbel can be reached on 571-272-4919. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval

Art Unit: 3752

(PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Davis Hwu

DAVIS HWU
PRIMARY EXAMINER